AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A method for setting up and/or clearing down and sustaining a communications link, comprising:

providing a communications link between at least two local devices in a transport network by local switching centers associated with the local devices;

controlling the setup and/or clear-down of the communications link by a central control device via a control network;

controlling the connection setup and/or clear-down in the transport network using at least two control information items;

using a connection information item defining a timeslot connection via a switching matrix representing a first control information item; and

providing a protocol information item representing a second control information item for the central control device and/or for the local devices to select communications protocols to be used and useable transport media.

2. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 1,

in which the control information item is complemented by a media information item which relates to the transport network and identifies at least one transport network medium for the communications link.

3. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the communications link comprises at least two connection elements in the transport network, where each connection element uses at least one respective communications protocol whose layer structure differs in at least one layer and in which the control information item is complemented by an information item which identifies a conversion apparatus for the various communications protocols.

4. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the communications link comprises at least two connection elements in the transport network, where each connection element uses at least one respective communications protocol whose layer structure

differs in at least one layer and in which the control information item is complemented by an information item which identifies a media access device for a respective communication medium.

5. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, in which an information item is provided centrally to complement the control information item in the area of the central control device.

6. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claims 4, in which an information item is provided locally to complement the control information item and is ascertained at least once by the central control device in the course of the handling of a communications link.

7. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 3, in which connection elements between local devices in the transport network use the Internet Protocol for transmission, and in which connection control is effected by assigning to an IP address one PCM data-stream subscriber line and a local device.

8. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, in which control information checks whether a connection setup via the transport network is necessary, and provides the connection elsewhere.

9. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 8, in which the control information item used is at least one address for a local device, and if the communications link relates to communications terminals which are connected to the same local device, a connection is set up without the communications data being converted on a transport-network-specific basis.

10. (Currently Amended) An ~~arrangement~~ apparatus for setting up and/or clearing down, and sustaining, a communications link, comprising:

a transport network to provide a communications link;

a control network to control the setup and/or clear-down of the communications link;

a first device to control the connection setup and/or clear-down in the transport network via the control network, the device configured with a physical separation from the transport network, which output at least two control information items,

and in which the transport network has at least two local devices to output and receive communications data; and

a switching center to provide a communications link in the transport network, where at least one connection element of the communications link is in the form of a connection which uses the Internet Protocol as communications protocol.

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, in which the control network has a central device and is operatively connected to a second device to provide transport-network-specific protocol information and/or transport network media information.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 11, in which the second device is arranged centrally in the area of the first device.

13. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 11, in which the second device is arranged locally in the area of the local device.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, in which a local device has at least one conversion device in the form of a gateway to convert a TDM protocol into an IP protocol.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, in which the local device has at least one network access device to an Ethernet, in the form of a transceiver.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, in which a local device has at least a first device to address evaluation of addresses for local devices which output a first signal when a communications link relates to a single central device.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 16, in which the first signal is output to a device to access timeslots in the TDM data stream from the local device, and the local device shorts the connection in the TDM data stream in response to the reception of the signal.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 17, in which the connection is shorted by interchanging the reading and writing directions.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, in which the local device is in the form of an integrated communications terminal.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 19, in which the integrated communications terminal is in the form of a telephone.

21. (Currently Amended) The ~~arrangement~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 19, in which the communications terminal is in the form of a personal computer.